Adult Literacy Contact Centre NEWSLETTER

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A project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C.

Workplace Language Training Program

Funds are available for English as a second language employees to participate in workplace training programs through a "Language at Work" program initiated by Employment and Immigration Canada last year.

"Language at Work is designed primarily to assist immigrant women with language barriers receive workplace training in literacy, language and numeracy skills," explains Pam Fru, Skill Development Consultant with the Developmental Programs Branch, EIC regional headquarters in Vancouver.

The program covers costs associated with employee needs assessment, course development, teaching equipment, and the delivery of training, including instructors' wages. Participating companies contribute by making employees available for the required course time, providing training space, and, if possible, assessing their own needs.

The minimum training time is five hours a week for 16 weeks, and agreements (between EIC and the workplace) can last up to three years.

"EIC will pay up to 100% of instructional costs, which includes salaries, books and teaching materials, and up to 100% of any assessment required," explains Fru. "However, we expect the employer to absorb some of the costs, such as providing space and paying for time. We expect them to compromise a little bit." She cites as an example two-hour training sessions held after regular work shifts in which the employer and EIC each pay one hour's wages.

One LAW program involving 23 employees was completed last month at Vancouver's Palisades Hotel. The hotel contracted with the Open Learning Agency through its Workplace Training Systems consulting service to deliver language training skills to 23 ESL employees. Language at Work paid for 50% of the employees' salaries and 100% of the instructional costs. The program was the subject of a "Workforce Education Forum" held at Simon Fraser University's Harbourside Campus on March 28. Employment and Immigration Canada and Open Learning Agency participants joined union and hotel representatives in a panel discussion to explain how the program worked. The forum was sponsored by the "Partnerships at Work" project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C.

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Employers interested in initiating LAW in the workplace should contact their local EIC Centre, says Fru. If an outside needs assessment is necessary, Fru says EIC will make arrangements with the OLA.

The program began in January, 1990, and funds are available on a continuing basis to allow qualifying employers to participate. ❐

Literacy Alive Update

At least three communities in B.C. will participate in next month's national "Literacy Alive" teleconference, a "live-by-satellite" television event on the state and future of literacy in Canada scheduled for nationwide cable broadcast on May 11.

The conference, described as an "electronic town hall meeting," is a project of the United Nations Association of Canada, the National Literacy Secretariat, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and other agencies. The format is designed to bring together literacy learners, practitioners, and community groups in a day long participatory forum. Conference presenters include literacy tutors and learners from a range of ethnic backgrounds and geographical regions.

The conference will originate live from Vancouver; Iqualuit, Northwest Territories; North York, Ontario; and St. John's, Newfoundland. The moderator of the event is former CBC correspondent Ann Medina, who will host the opening and closing two-hour sessions from the national coordinating site in Toronto.

Participating B.C. community sites to date are:

VANCOUVER: Vancouver Community College, Langara Campus (co-sponsor - Douglas College)
Contact: Betty Nobel, King Edward Campus, VCC
Phone 875-6111, local 724

FORT ST. JAMES: School District No. 56, Vanderhoof
Contact: Ernie Mannering, Phone 567-2284

WILLIAMS LAKE: Williams Lake City Hall
Contact: Debbie DeMare, Project Literacy Williams Lake, Phone 398-8400

For additional information on B.C. sites, contact Community Site Development Coordinator Gabriella Sharrard at (416) 256-5867 (Toronto).

The Vancouver broadcast will feature the City of Vancouver's Municipal Workplace Language Program, a partnership between the city's Equal Employment Opportunity program, the Hastings Institute, and CUPE local 1004. The program provides on-the-job learning sites with an emphasis on accessibility and flexible timetabling to accommodate workers' needs. Literacy Alive will look at a "day in the life" of two participants in the program.

The Canadian Radio Television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has issued a special licence to allow regional cable operators to carry the broadcast. Literacy Alive national organizers advise B.C. viewers to contact their local cable stations to confirm broadcast times. ❐

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The Adult Literacy Contact Centre is a project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C. and is jointly funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology; and the National Literacy Secretariat.

The Centre welcomes receiving your literacy news by phone, fax or mail. We reserve the right to edit written submissions for the newsletter.

The newsletter is published monthly and distributed on the last working day of the month. It is available free of charge to any individual or agency upon request.

Rural Literacy Conference

Canada's first international conference on rural literacy featuring speakers from Canada, the U.S., Germany, Spain, Ireland, the U.S.S.R. and UNESCO will be held May 10-13 in Ottawa.

The conference is a project of the Agricultural and Rural Restructuring Group (ARRG), a group of Canadian researchers and policy makers affiliated with the School of Rural Planning and Development at the University of Guelph, Ontario. ARRG's Working Group on Rural Literacy, formed last year with support from Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, aims to develop a three to four year plan of action and establish a research agenda on key rural literacy issues.

The conference will bring together researchers, practitioners and learners to share information and views on the issues from within the rural literacy environment.

It features two keynote speakers, workshops, panel and round table discussions. Workshop topics include:

* the realities of Canadian rural literacy;
* comparative cases from the U.S., Spain, Ireland and Siberia;
* sustainable delivery (community literacy tools, overcoming obstacles to program delivery, technology).

B.C. will be represented at the conference by Ellen White, author, teacher and linguist from the Nanaimo Indian band. A plenary session on native rural literacy issues is scheduled for May 12.

Speakers include Jean Paul Hautecoeur of UNESCO on, "Thinking about Rural Literacy," and ARRG Working Group Coordinator Raymond Day, on "Rural Literacy in Canada: the Issues."

Shirley Dawe, ARRG research assistant and a co-organizer of the event with Day, adds they expect a turnout of about 50, including the 15 members of the planning committee.

Additional information on the conference is available from Raymond Day (416) 366-8464 (Toronto), or Shirley Dawe (519) 824-4120, extension 2443 (Guelph). □

Benefit for Adult Learners

The PACE Bursary Banquet, a benefit evening for the PACE bursary program for adult part time learners, will be held Thursday, May 30 at Vancouver's Arbutus Club. Master of ceremonies for the evening is Dr. Lawrence Fast, PACE Bursary Committee Chairman and Principal of Vancouver Community College, King Edward Campus. The 5:30 p.m. reception and 6:15 p.m. dinner will be followed by an art auction (including a Tony Onley watercolour), adult education nostalgia display, door prizes and entertainment. Tickets are $35.00 per person. For more information phone Jennifer Crawford, PACE, 266-2534. □

Canada and World Books Voyage into Print

Learners' Voices, a selection of writings from the Canadian Book Voyage, the 12 books of learners' writings which traveled coast to coast as part of a United Nations International Literacy Year project in 1990, is now available through the Movement for Canadian Literacy.

The 41-page black and white illustrated booklet contains work representing each Canadian province and territory, including two selections from B.C. The booklets are $7.00 each. To order, contact:

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Movement for Canadian Literacy
500 - 800 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1S 6K7
Phone: (613) 563-2464

Words Are What I've Got, another publication arising from the Book Voyage and compiled by the International Task Force on Literacy (ITFL), features the writings of learners from over 50 countries around the world. Each piece is presented in the writer's own language as well as translated into English, French and Spanish. Information on literacy and the link to poverty, life expectancy, the status of women and economic development is provided for each country represented. All proceeds from the sale of the book will be donated to those literacy organizations in the third world which were part of the Book Voyage.

The ITFL is now offering Words Are What I've Got at special pre-publication prices: $12.00 each for 10-100 copies; $10.00 each for 100-1000 copies; $8.00 each for 1000 or more. Orders must be received by May 31, 1991. For further information contact:

International Task Force on Literacy
c/o ICAE
720 Bathurst Street, Suite 500
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 2R4
Phone: (416) 588-1211
Fax: (416) 588-5725 □

Prairie Literacy Institute

Practitioners with a minimum of two years experience in adult literacy will participate in the first Prairie Literacy Institute at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon June 17-28, 1991. Sponsored by The Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba, The Literacy Coordinators of Alberta, and the Saskatchewan Literacy Network, the Institute will offer participants a choice of two courses entitled "Advanced Literacy Methods" and "Learning Differences, Challenges and Difficulties." Registrants in an Institute course are also invited to attend a series of afternoon seminars for which a list of topics and presenters will be available in late May.

Participants in the Institute will be selected on the basis of experience in adult literacy. Fifteen seats are reserved for each of the three prairie provinces until May 15, with five seats open to participants from outside the prairies. After May 15, all remaining seats will be allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis. Travel allowances are available for out-of-town participants and a limited number of bursaries may be available to subsidize the $200 tuition fee. For further information contact:

Nayda Veeman
Saskatchewan Literacy Network
P.O. Box 1520
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7K 3R5
Phone: (306) 653-7368
or (306) 653-7178
Fax: (306) 933-6490 □

Educational Review Newsletter Available

B.C. Human Resource Development Project directed by Dr. Paul Gallagher, which was formed in February this year to assess B.C.'s educational needs, has issued its first project newsletter. The project has formed a steering committee with representatives from labour, industry, education and government which will meet monthly until June and quarterly thereafter. According to the newsletter, the committee has a mandate to "develop a broad framework for education, training and retraining that will make B.C. more competitive."

Newsletters will be issued regularly through the project office. To add your name to the mailing list, contact:

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